

February 11, 2020

**Re: HB 481 Transportation - Commercial Signs - Penalty**

Hon. Chair Kumar Barve  
6 Bladen Street, House Room 251  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Mr. Chair,

HB 481 increases the penalty for placement of an illegal commercial sign within the right-of-way of a state highway from \$25 to \$1,000.

The lack of a substantive penalty makes the law unenforceable. Irrelevant penalties don't sufficiently fund cleanup efforts or deter violations. Agencies pay more in cleanup costs than they would recover in the penalties, which means the penalties are never pursued and the signs are infrequently removed.

This leaves violators to place these signs with reckless abandon. In public right-of-ways, on infrastructure, anywhere they can profitably place them. The lack of a real penalty leaves us with out of control bad actors.

Thank you for the hearing for House Bill 481. I am happy to take questions and I ask for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Delegate Robin Grammer